

FIRST COMICS 1982 1987
FIFTH
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39
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RADGER



WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?



The Badger is **Norbert Sykes**, a Vietnam veteran suffering from an extremely rare multiple personality disorder, which has its origins in childhood trauma. Seven great personalities in one. The personality most frequently inhabited by Norbert, indeed almost *exclusively preferred*, is the Badger, a self-styled crime fighter who rides the highways and by-ways of America, meting out bloody justice to jaywalkers, ticket scalpers, indifferent teenaged fast food clerks, in fact, *any damn body he feels like because he's CRAZY!*

Badger is an expert at hand-to-hand combat. He began his training in Shorin-ryu but has since gone on to master dozens of obscure, esoteric, arcane, not to mention abstruse martial arts, the likes of which you seldom hear about.

He can also talk to the animals — just like Dr. Doolittle, or Lorne Greene. Only Badger gets better results than Lorne Greene.

Badger lives with **Ham the Weather Wizard** in a castle south of Barneveld, Wisconsin. Ham and Badger met while both were inmates at a state mental hospital. Through cunning and chicanery, Ham has amassed a considerable fortune.

Don't miss the **Badger/Nexus** six-issue crossover mini-epic continuing in **Nexus #48**, and the **Badger/Luther Ironheart** crossover in **Crossroads #3**. Both on sale this month!

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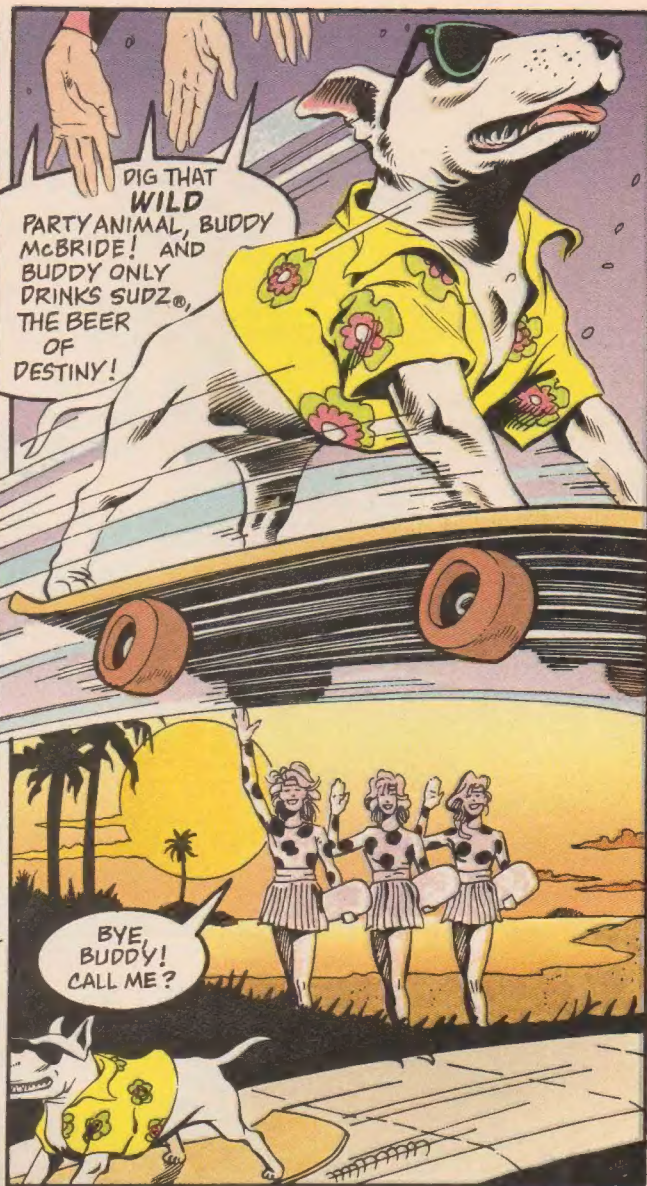
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A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION





♪ HE'S A SUPER PARTY ANIMAL ♪
AND HIS NAME IS BUDDY McBRIDE--
WITH SOME BRAND NEW DUDS ♪ AND A BARREL OF SUDZ®, IT PUTS HIM IN A POWER GLIDE! ♪



DIG THAT WILD PARTY ANIMAL, BUDDY McBRIDE! AND BUDDY ONLY DRINKS SUDZ®, THE BEER OF DESTINY!

BYE, BUDDY! CALL ME?



FABULOUS, BUDDY!

IT'S BEAUTIFUL. WHAT'D I TELL YOU?



BUDDY, WHAT CAN I SAY? SHEER GENIUS.



HEY, COME ON, BUDDY! WE KNOW WHAT A **PERFECTIONIST** YOU ARE! CUT YOURSELF A LITTLE SLACK!

GRRR...

LET ME TALK TO HIM, B.J...

BUDDY, TRUST ME, SWEETHEART.... WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU GOT A HEAD-ACHE?



OKAY! OKAY! SORRY, FOLKS-- BUDDY HAS A LITTLE HEADACHE. HE WANTS TO TAKE A NAP.

BARK BARK BARK



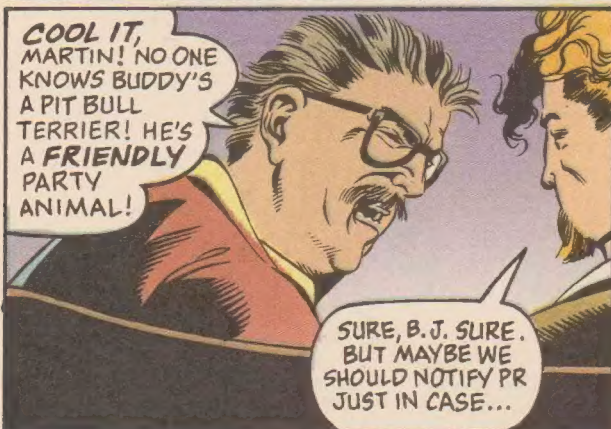
GRR...

COME ON, PAL. THE GENIUS NEEDS A REST.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE LITTLE JERK'S PROBLEM IS? HE'S GETTING A **SWELLED** HEAD.

BE COOL, MARTIN. BUDDY'S ONE OF OUR BIGGEST ASSETS. HE'S HAD A ROUGH WEEK.

ROUGH WEEK MY ASS! HE'S A PIT BULL TERRIER! WITH HIM, EVERY WEEK IS A ROUGH WEEK! WHEN'S HE GONNA BLOW? THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO KNOW!



COOL IT, MARTIN! NO ONE KNOWS BUDDY'S A PIT BULL TERRIER! HE'S A **FRIENDLY** PARTY ANIMAL!

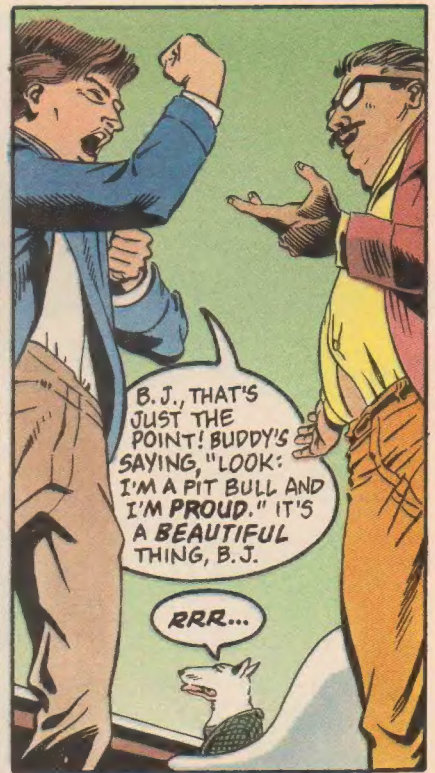
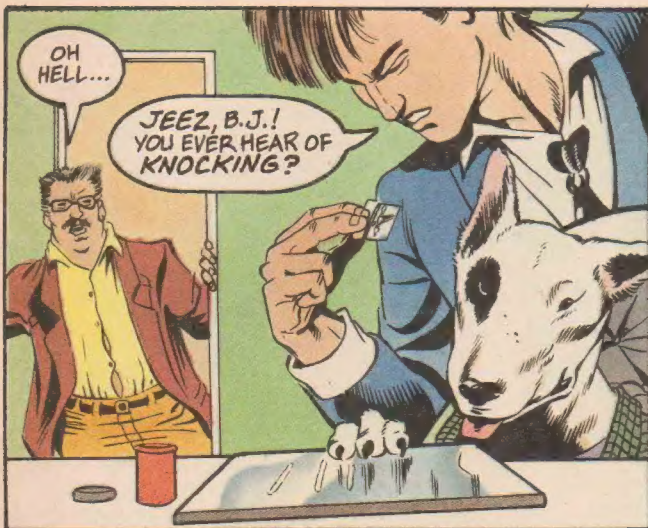
SURE, B.J. SURE. BUT MAYBE WE SHOULD NOTIFY PR JUST IN CASE...

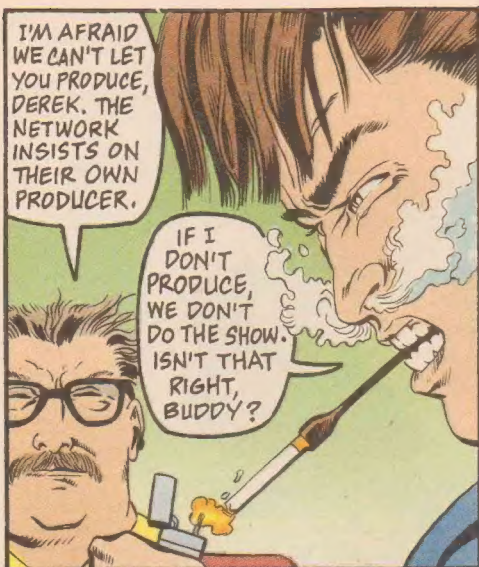


BUDDY
BRIDE

NO. I WANT TO TALK TO BUDDY FIRST.

SAY BUDDY-- DEREK --MIND IF I COME IN?





I'M AFRAID WE CAN'T LET YOU PRODUCE, DEREK. THE NETWORK INSISTS ON THEIR OWN PRODUCER.

IF I DON'T PRODUCE, WE DON'T DO THE SHOW. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, BUDDY?



YOU SIGNED A CONTRACT, DEREK.

SCREW THE CONTRACT. YOU'RE UPSETTING BUDDY. YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THAT...

YOU DON'T WANT TO MEET MY SILENT PARTNER, DO YOU? I WARNED YOU ABOUT MY SILENT PARTNER.

SCREW YOUR SILENT PARTNER. YOU THINK HE'S THE ONLY DOGGY STAR?

GRRR...

WE OUGHT TO GO WITH A SAFE BREED RIGHT NOW, BEFORE SOMETHING HAPPENS!

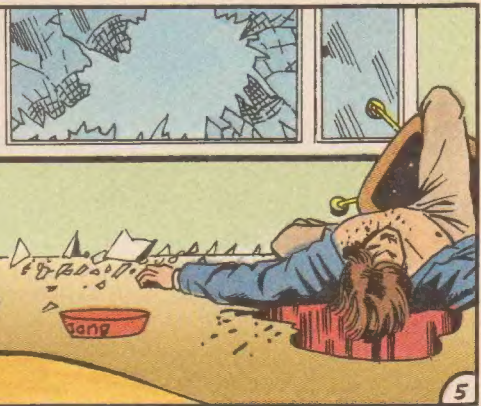
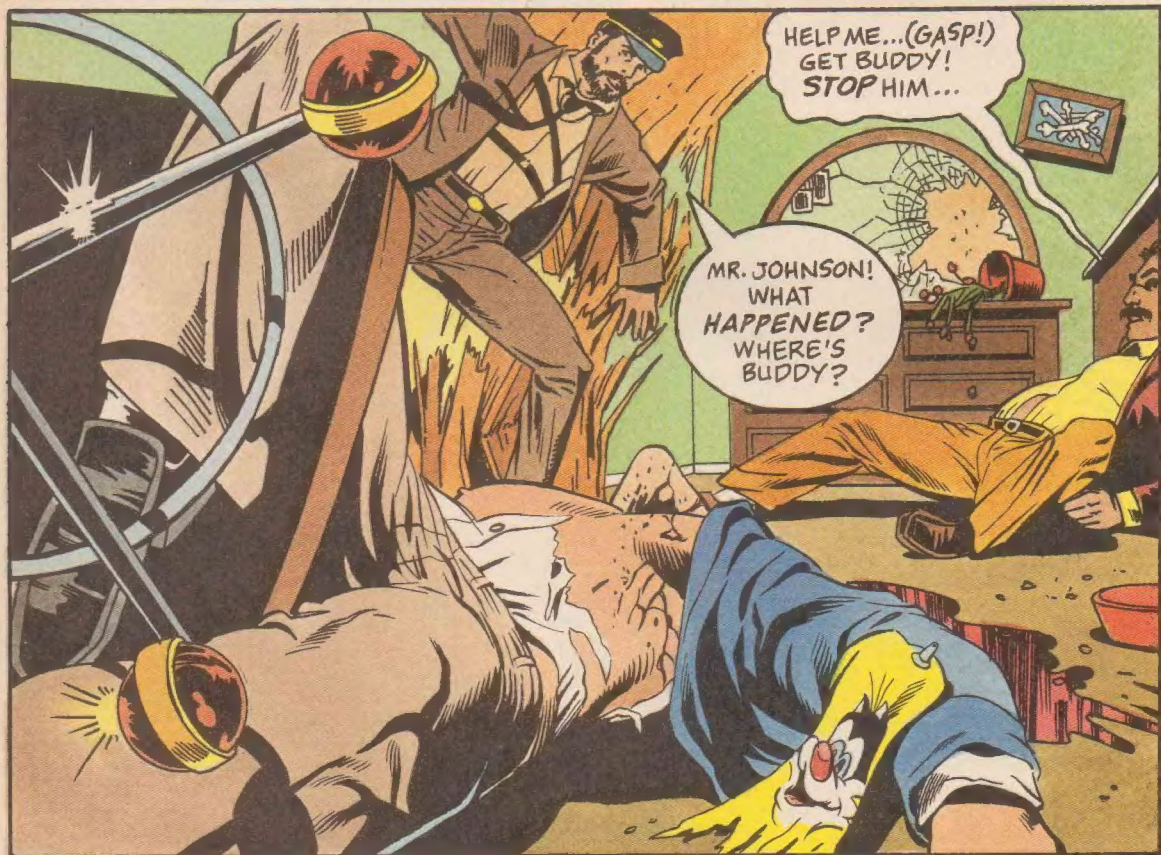
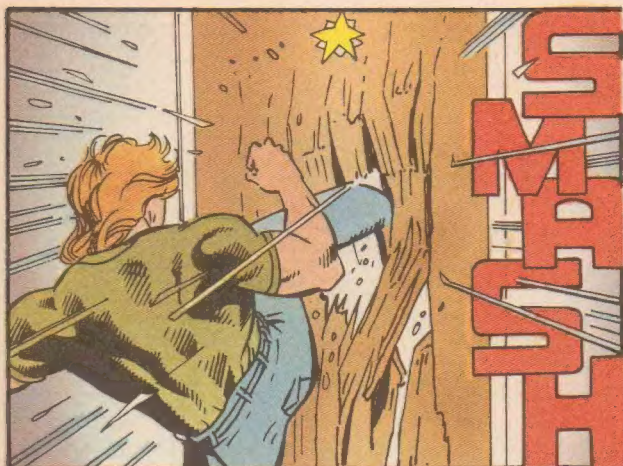


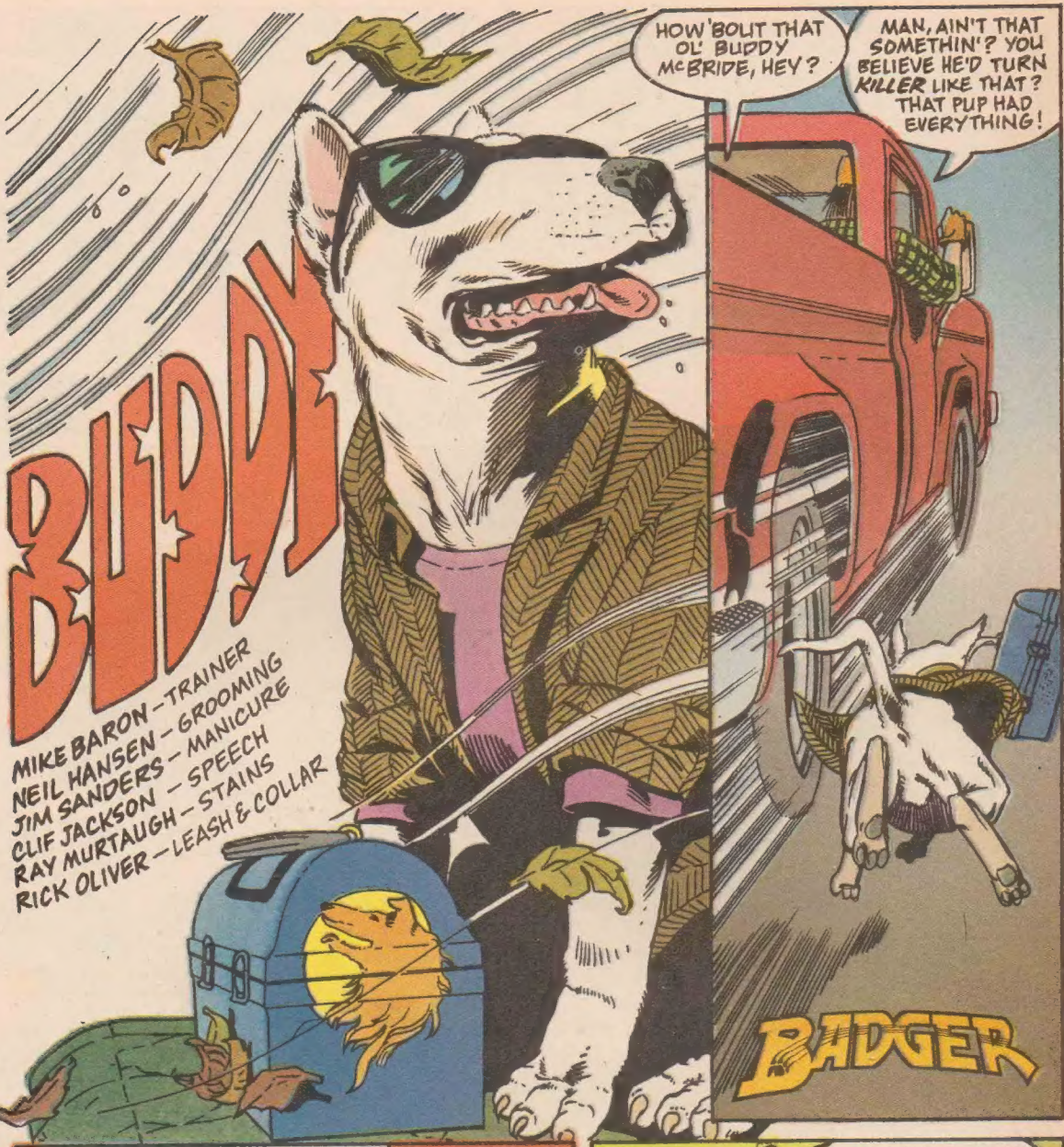
YOU RACIST SWINE!



OPEN THE DOOR!

I'M TRYING! STAND BACK! I'LL HAVE TO KICK IT IN!





HOW 'BOUT THAT
OL' BUDDY
MCBRIDE, HEY?

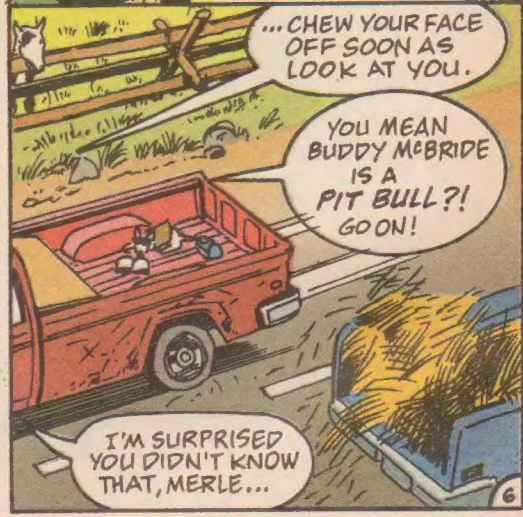
MAN, AIN'T THAT
SOMETHIN'? YOU
BELIEVE HE'D TURN
KILLER LIKE THAT?
THAT PUP HAD
EVERYTHING!

MIKE BARON - TRAINER
NEIL HANSEN - GROOMING
JIM SANDERS - MANICURE
CLIF JACKSON - SPEECH
RAY MURTAUGH - STAINS
RICK OLIVER - LEASH & COLLAR



IT WENT TO HIS HEAD, JUST LIKE
BELUSHI. HE SNAPPED UNDER
THE PRESSURE.

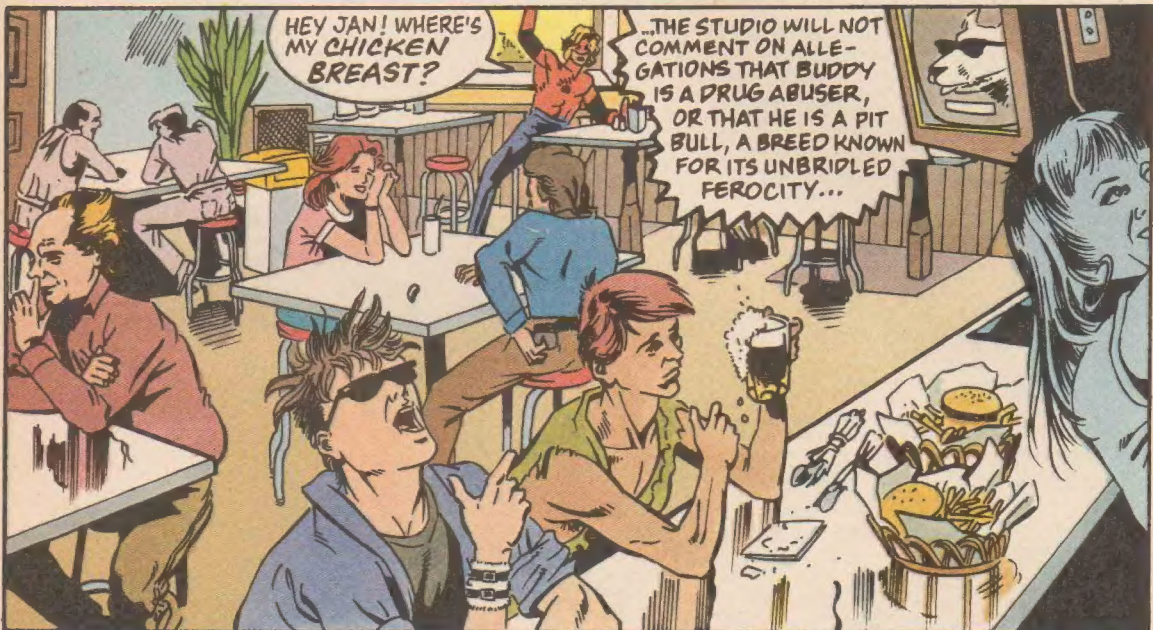
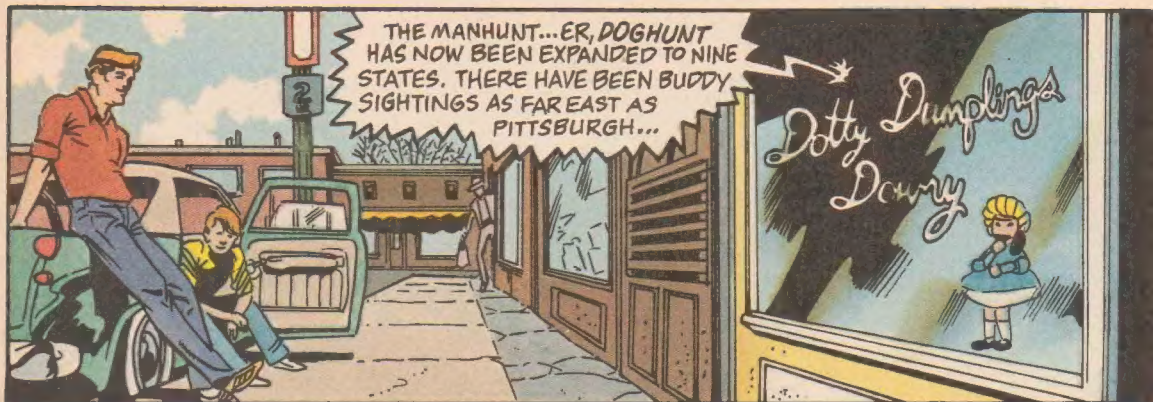
I DON'T KNOW,
MERLE. I HEAR
ALL THEM
PIT BULLS IS
CRAZY...

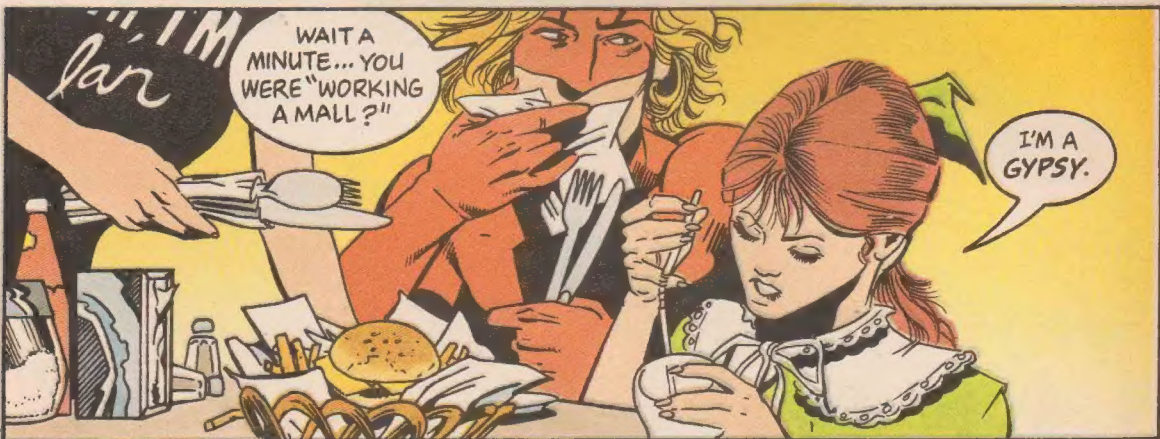
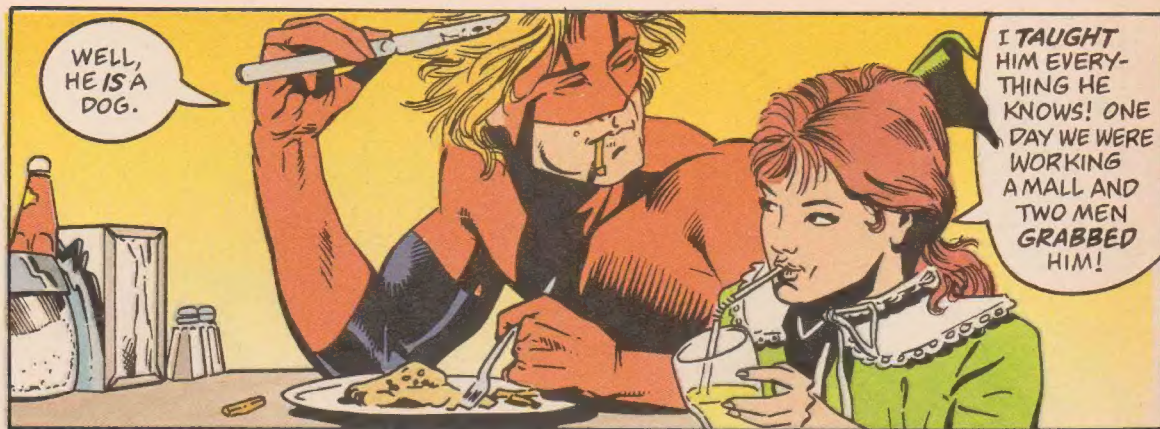


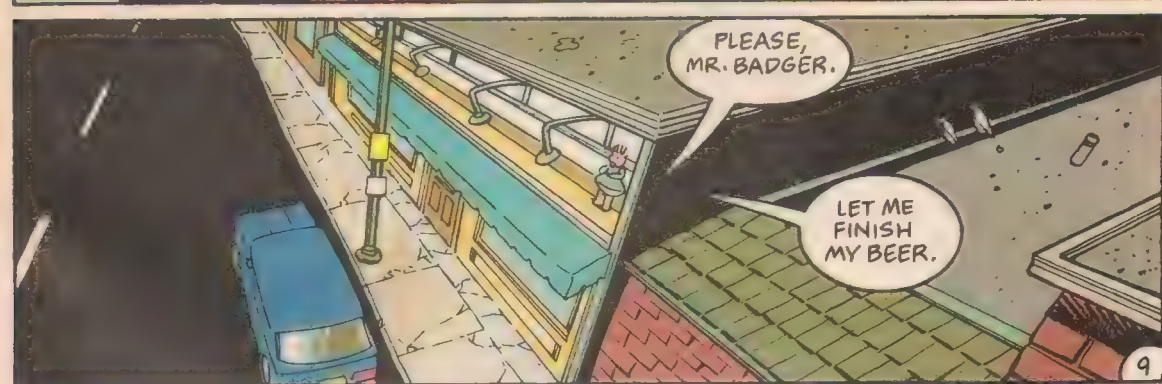
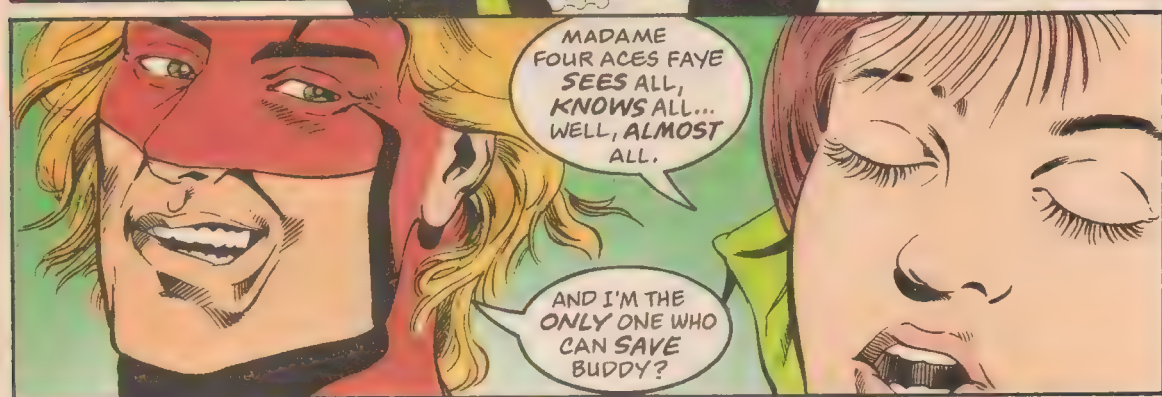
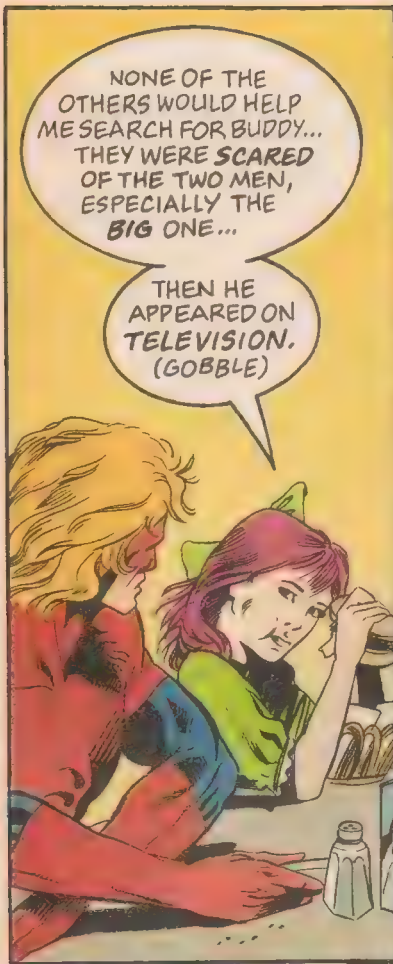
... CHEW YOUR FACE
OFF SOON AS
LOOK AT YOU.

YOU MEAN
BUDDY MCBRIDE
IS A
PIT BULL?!
GOON!

I'M SURPRISED
YOU DIDN'T KNOW
THAT, MERLE...









CONFOUND IT, SIR!
THIS IS NOT AN
AVIARY!

HAM, IT'S ONLY
FOR A FEW
MINUTES!

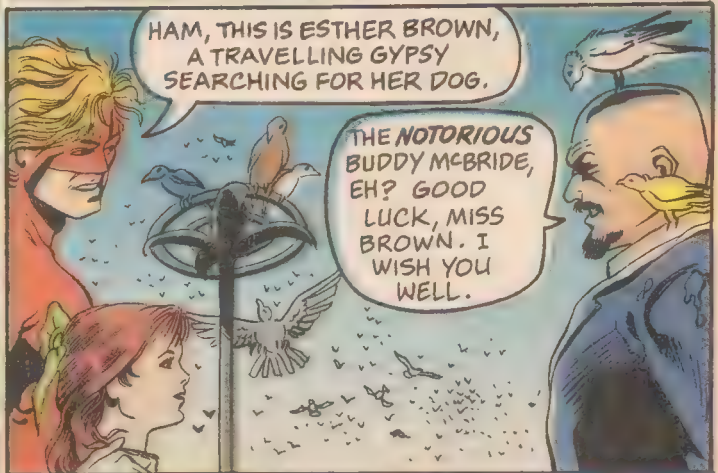
THE LIFE OF
A GREAT
ARTIST IS
AT STAKE!

CAW

CHIRP

SCREECH

WHO IS
THIS
CHILD?

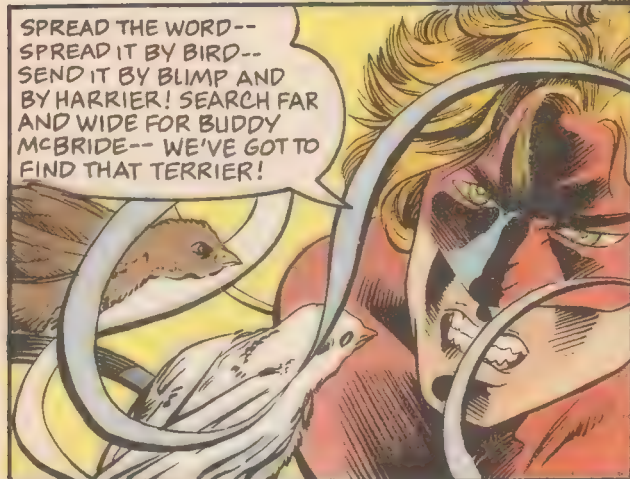


HAM, THIS IS ESTHER BROWN,
A TRAVELLING GYPSY
SEARCHING FOR HER DOG.

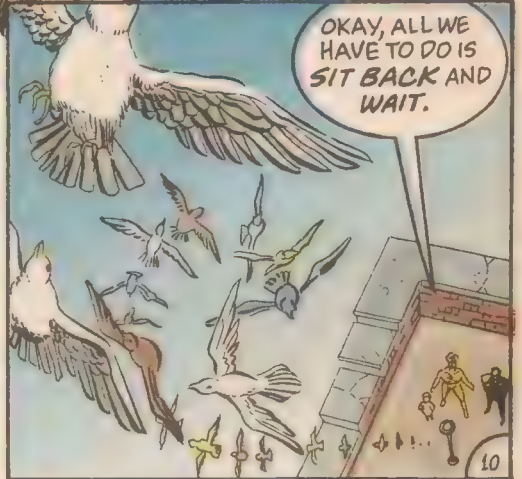
THE **NOTORIOUS**
BUDDY MCBRIDE,
EH? GOOD
LUCK, MISS
BROWN. I
WISH YOU
WELL.



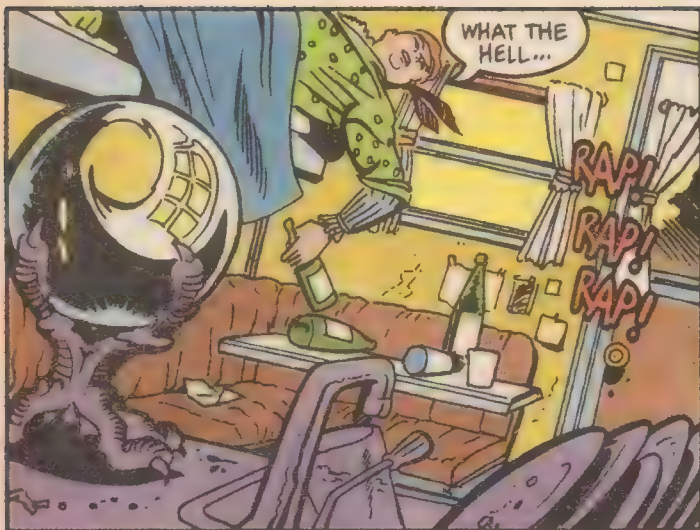
AND I WISH YOU,
BADGER, TO CLEAN
THIS PLACE
THOROUGHLY OR
I SHALL TURN YOU
INTO A TOAD.



SPREAD THE WORD--
SEND IT BY BIRD--
SEND IT BY BLIMP AND
BY HARRIER! SEARCH FAR
AND WIDE FOR BUDDY
MCBRIDE-- WE'VE GOT TO
FIND THAT TERRIER!



OKAY, ALL WE
HAVE TO DO IS
**SIT BACK AND
WAIT.**



WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING ABOUT?

A few months ago, the editor-in-chief of a reasonably large, fairly respectable comics publishing company proclaimed that comics had become "too depressing," and he felt it was time to put some "fun" back in them. Well, we all had a good laugh at his expense and then got disgustingly drunk celebrating the obvious demise of an erstwhile competitor.

"Fun" comics? Come on! We all know that the only really *good* comics nowadays are ones in which the protagonist 1) Realizes he's getting older and will probably end up a victim of premature senility from too many severe blows to the head, and then he spends all his time being moody and surly; 2) Kills a whole mess o' thoroughly

book?

No, of course you can't. When was the last time you even saw a humorous comic book, let alone actually *read* one?

And that, of course, is as it should be. We can't allow these walking anachronisms to undo all our work with a single bad one-liner! No sirreebobl! So here's what I think you should do: Boycott any store that sells anything other than dead-serious, suicidally depressing comics. Better yet, march right in there, seize the offending books from the racks, throw them out into the street, and *burn* them! There's no place for them in our legitimate medium! Why, if we allow them a foothold now, there's no telling what kind of heretical material might soon sprout up!

"This is serious literature here; one chuckle could send the entire industry spiraling back down into the miasma of illegitimacy."

reprehensible, unrehabilitatable, scum-sucking maggots to prove he's not so old after all, and then he feels bad about it; and 3) Inadvertently reduces a major metropolitan area or continent to radioactive slag because he really *is* getting older and his reflexes aren't all they used to be, and then he sulks around the house.

Right?

Hey, I might be tooting my own horn here, but I like to think that First has been at the forefront of this brave new age of wheezing old geezers with chips on their shoulders that are now all the rage in the medium. We dumped that "fun" stuff way back. In fact, this job hasn't been "fun" for years! This is serious literature here; one chuckle could send the entire industry spiraling back down into the miasma of illegitimacy.

I mean, a lot of dedicated, hardworking, talented professionals have poured a lot of sweat into vicious, personal attacks against each other in their attempts to elevate comics from the lowly status of a "genre" to the lofty heights of a "legitimate" medium. What would happen if somebody started publishing *unserious* comics? Can you imagine the repercussions if somebody put out a lighthearted or (gasp!) *humorous* comic

Before you know it, just about *anything* could show up in a comic book story!

Hang on a minute... I thought that was the whole idea in the first place.

In fact, now that I think about it, comics have always been a legitimate medium. Certain genres have dominated the medium from time to time, but there have always been comics that explored a wide variety of subjects. Only our own preconceptions have blinded us to the potential of the medium, and only our own insecurities have imbued us with an obsession to persuade others that our chosen reading material is "legitimate."

But when you get right down to it, what difference does it make? Will you enjoy comics more if corporate executives glance at you approvingly because they think you're reading something as weighty and oppressive as *Crime and Punishment*? Will you enjoy them any less if uninformed bozos cop an attitude about you?

I sincerely hope the answer to both those questions is a resounding "NO!" Then we can all get back to the serious business of reading and enjoying comics — and occasionally having a good laugh at our own expense.

—Rick Oliver

FIRST IN MAY

Lone Wolf and Cub #13: By Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima. Cover painting by Bill Sienkiewicz.

Badger #39: By Mike Baron and Neil Hansen.

Evangeline #9: By Charles Dixon, John Statema, and Ricardo Villagran. Bi-monthly series.

Nexus #48: Part four of six-part Nexus/Badger crossover. By Mike Baron and Steve Rude. \$1.75.

Dreadstar #38: By Jim Starlin, Luke McDonnell, and Val Mayerik. Bi-monthly series.

Grimjack #50: Special 50th anniversary issue. By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake.

Whisper #16: By Steven Grant and Spyder.

Howard Chaykin's American Flagg! #5: By Howard Chaykin, Mike Vosburg, John Moore, Richard Ory, Tony Van de Walle and Ken Bruzenak.

Crossroads #3: Badger and Luther Ironheart meet for the first time. By Roger Salick and Joe Staton. Prestige Format. 48 pages. Monthly, five-issue limited series.

Chronicles of Corum #11: By Mark Shalnbloom, Ken Hooper and Kelley Jones. Cover by Mike Mignola and P. Craig Russell. Bi-monthly series.

Sable #7: By Marv Wolfman, Bill Jaaska, and Doug Hazlewood.

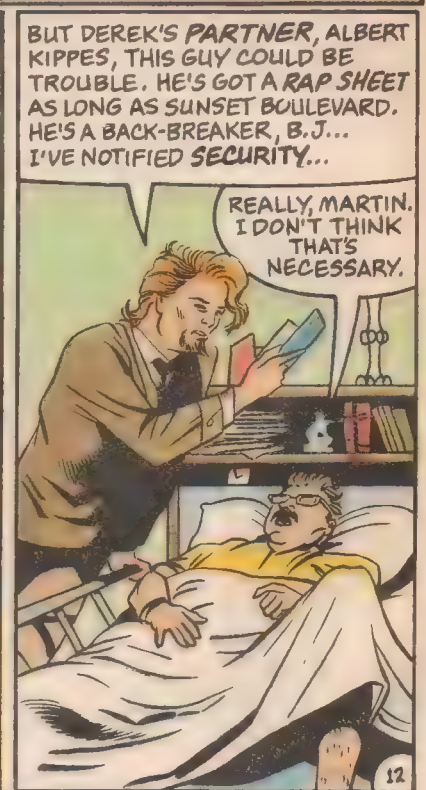
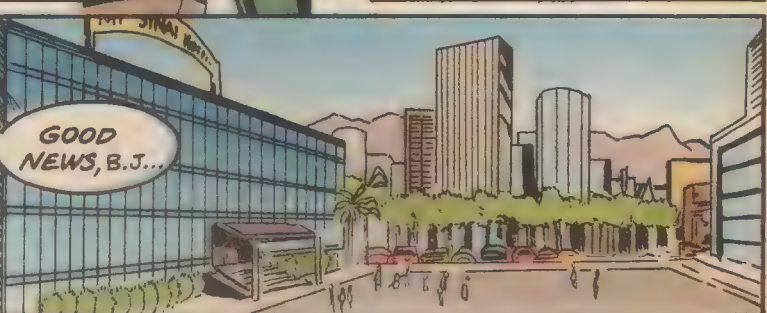
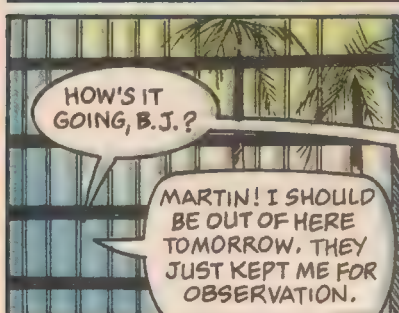
Is Nothing Sacred?

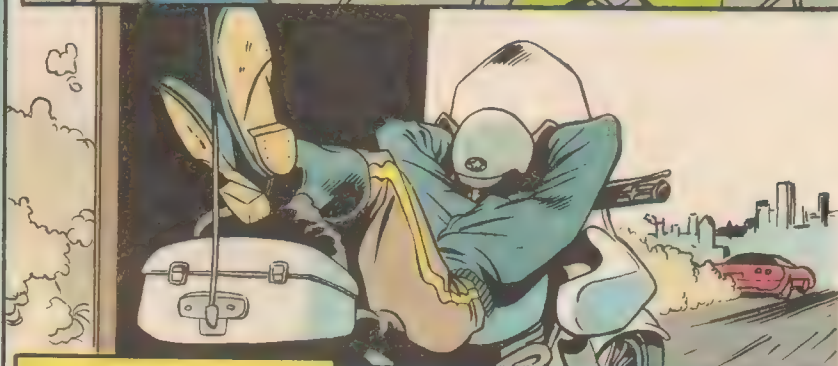
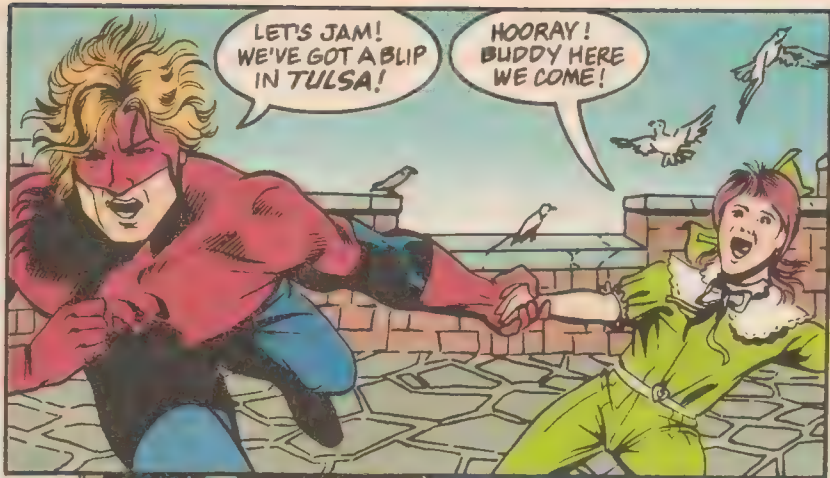
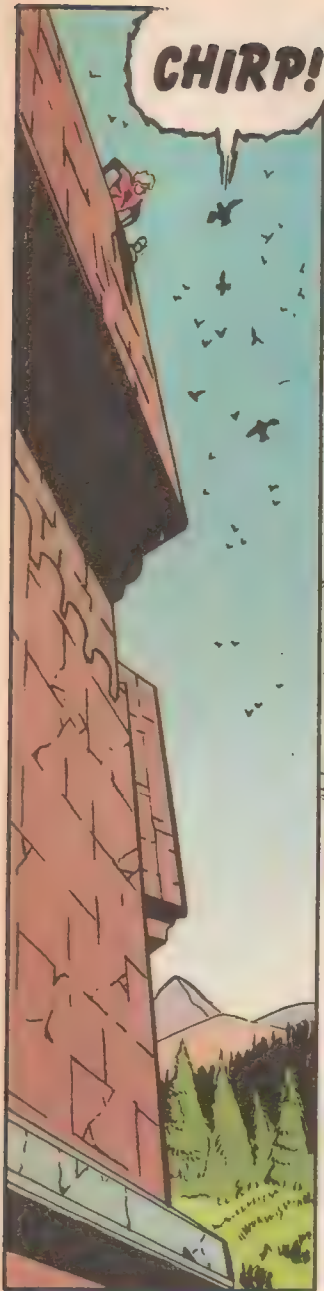
Find out as
Badger goes out
on a "Lim"
when new artist
Ron Lim joins
creator/writer
Mike Baron
for the monthly
exploits of
America's
number one
psycho.



BEGINNING IN

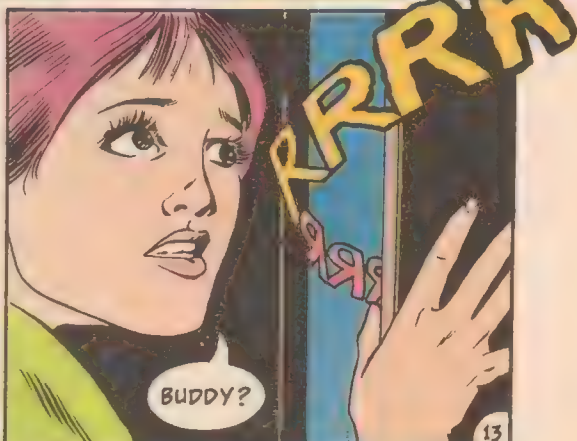
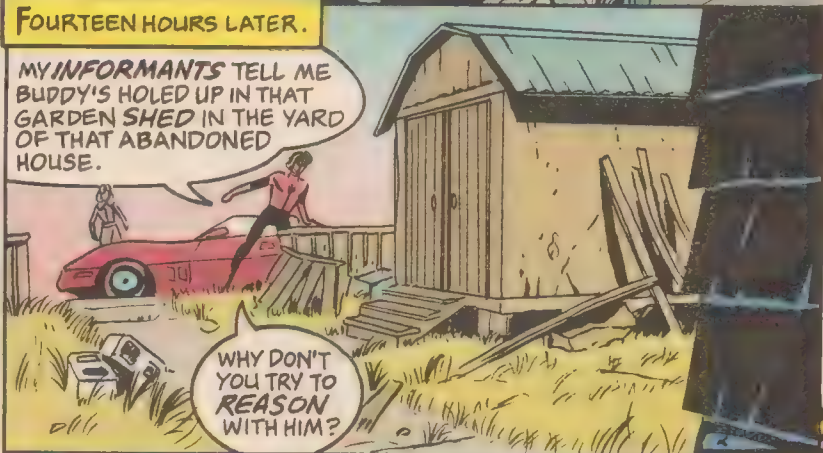
Coming in June from **FIRST**
COMICS

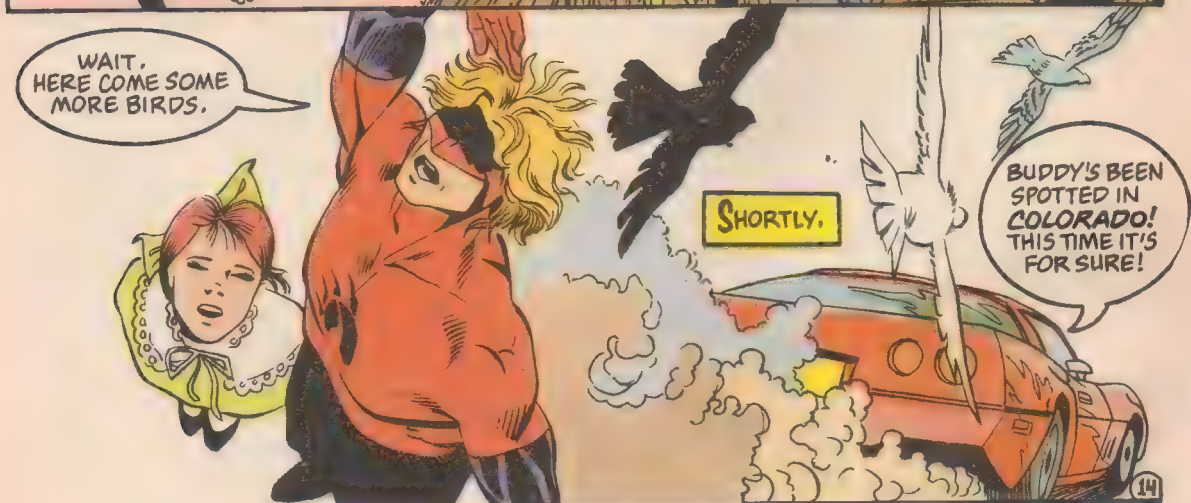
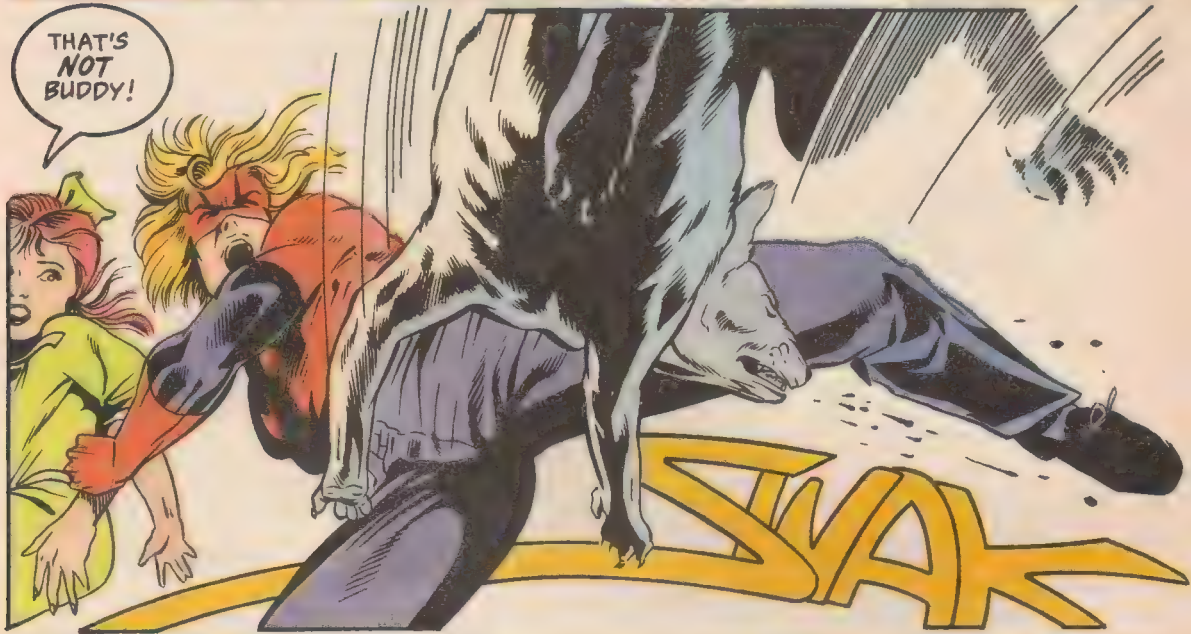




FOURTEEN HOURS LATER.

MY INFORMANTS TELL ME
BUDDY'S HOLED UP IN THAT
GARDEN SHED IN THE YARD
OF THAT ABANDONED
HOUSE.





NEAR BOULDER.

ACCORDING TO THAT HAWK, BUDDY'S STAYING AT MARK HARMON'S SKI LODGE. MARK'S AN OLD PAL OF HIS... BUDDY MAY NOT BE ALONE.

HE MAY BE ACCOMPANIED BY MEMBERS OF THE SO-CALLED "MCBRIDE MOB," BUDDY'S SYCOPHANTS AND HANGERS-ON WHO WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO PROTECT THEIR HERO.

DON'T WORRY, MR. BADGER. BUDDY WON'T HURT ANYONE.

IT'S NOT BUDDY I'M CONCERNED ABOUT.

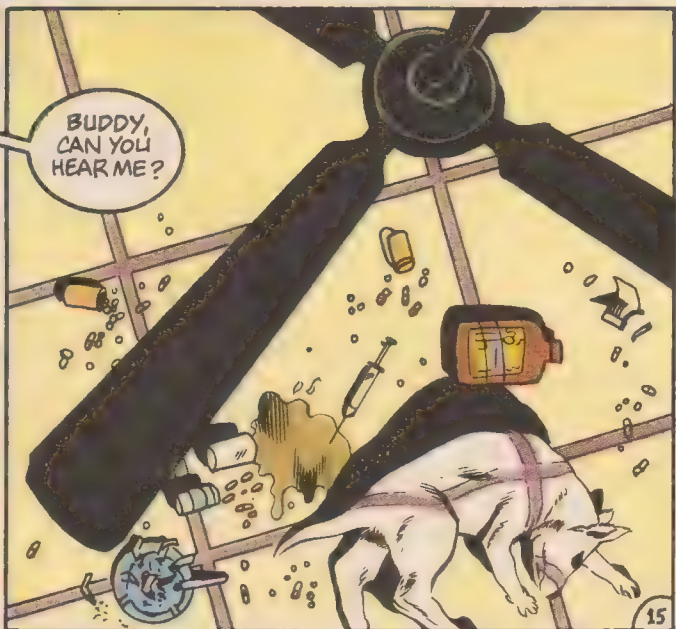
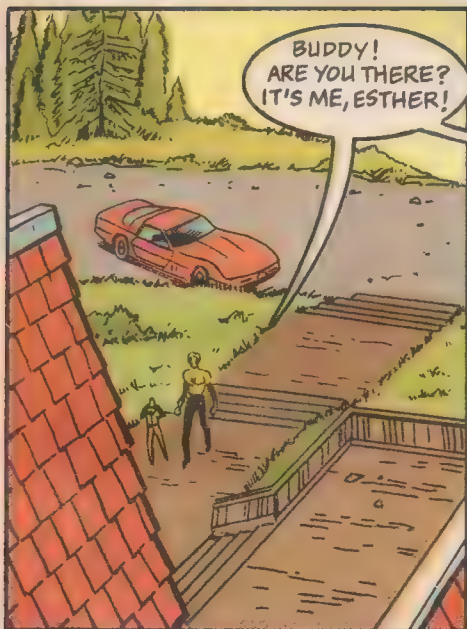


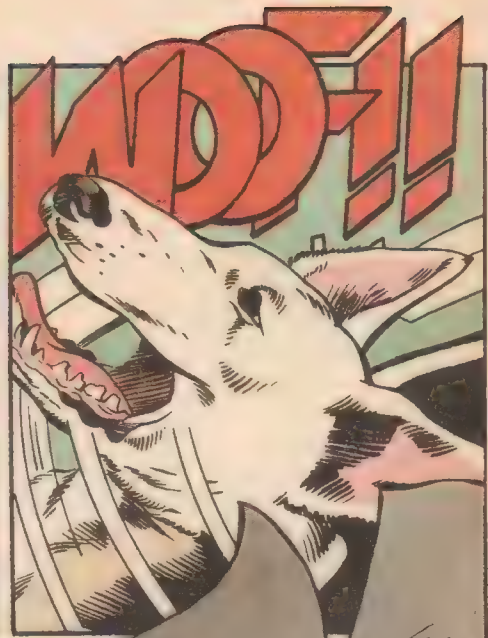
THERE IT IS. WE'LL PARK HERE AND WALK UP.

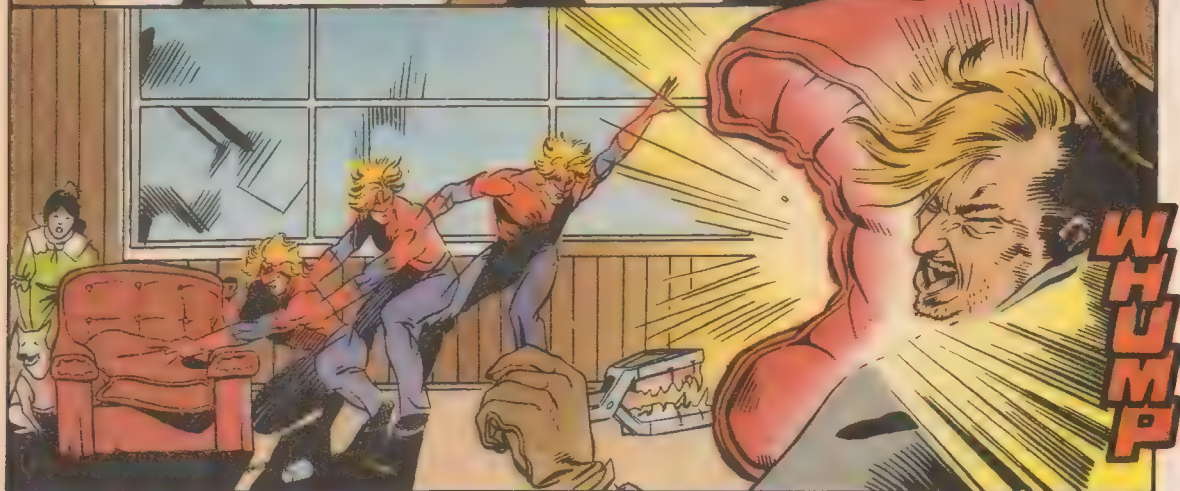


BUDDY!
ARE YOU THERE?
IT'S ME, ESTHER!

BUDDY,
CAN YOU
HEAR ME?







WWIII

BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER



THE COMPLETE ORIGIN STORY!

Hawkmoon

Jewel in the Skull

Michael Moorcock's
Eternal Champion has many names.
One of them is Elric of Melniboné.
Another is Dorian Hawkmoon.

The complete
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of THE JEWEL
IN THE SKULL
—now in
one deluxe format,
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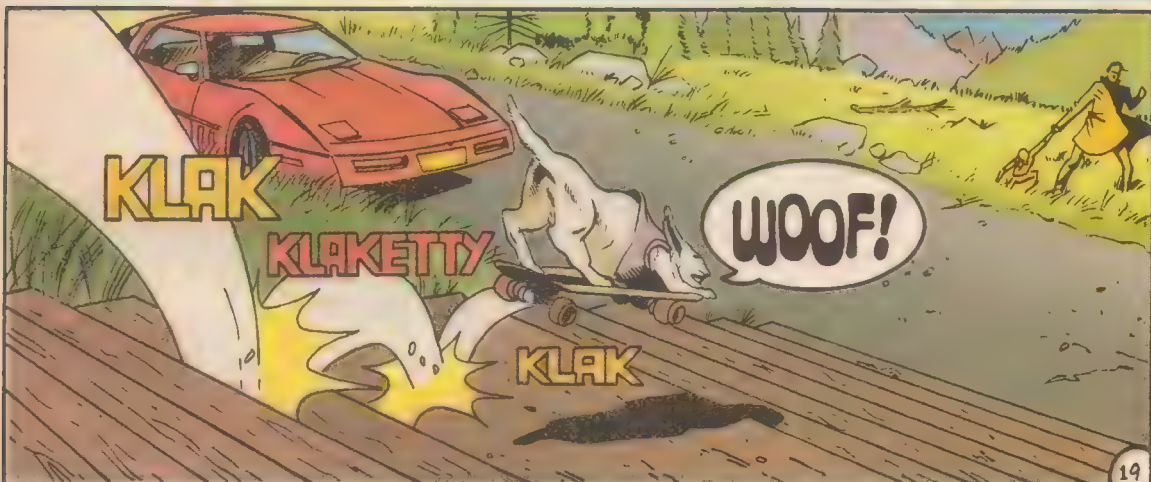
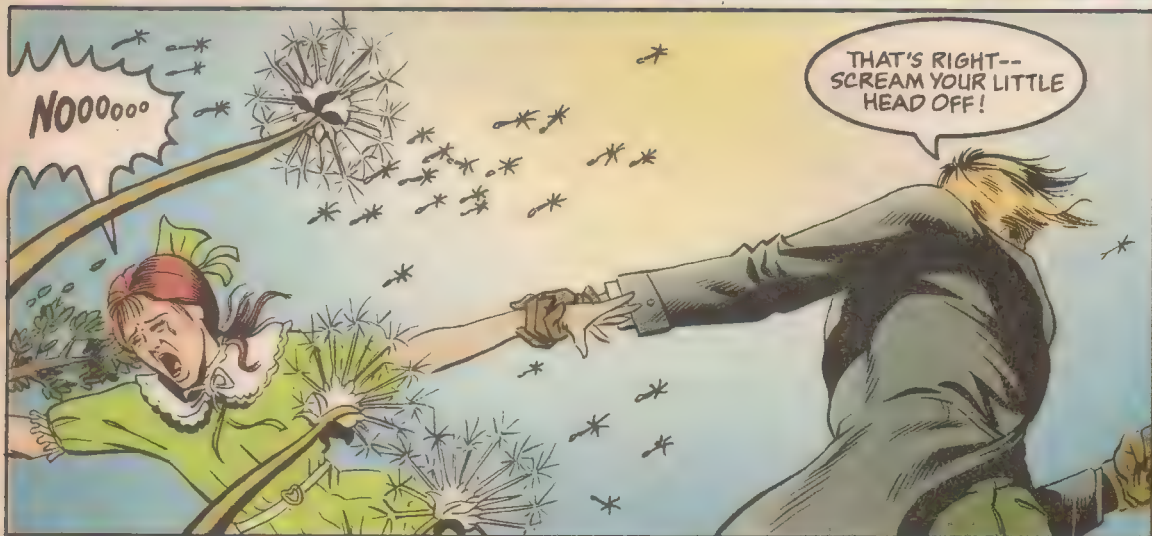
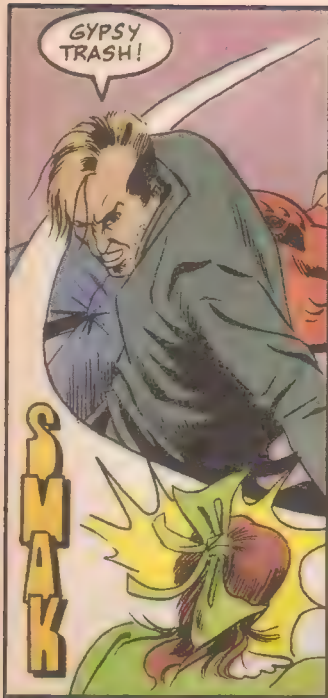
120 pages. \$9.95

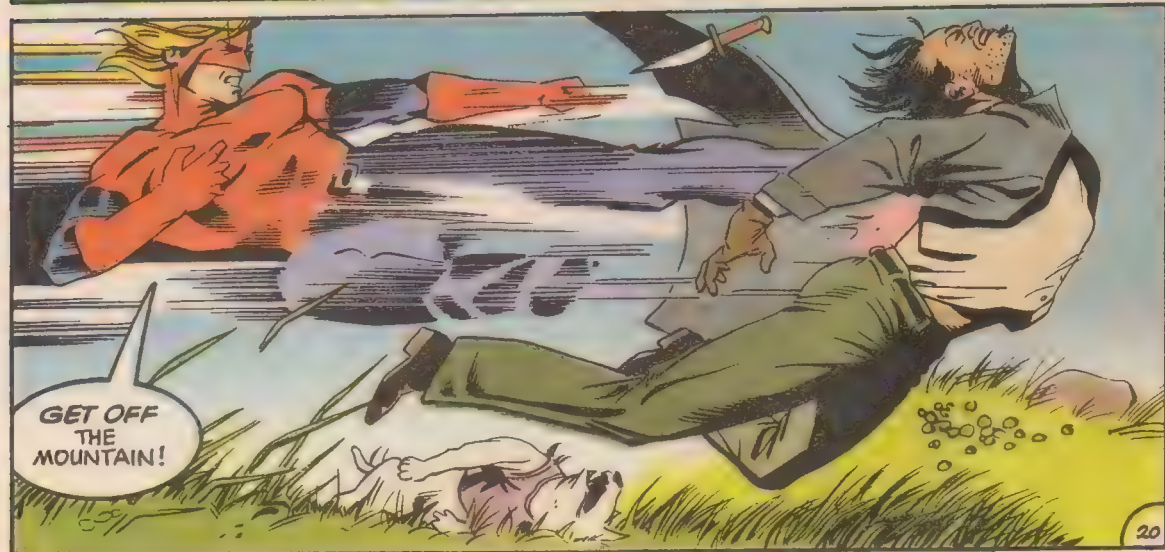
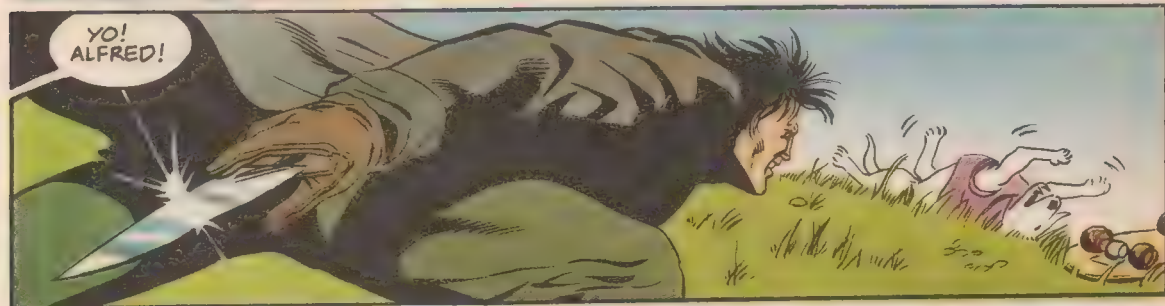
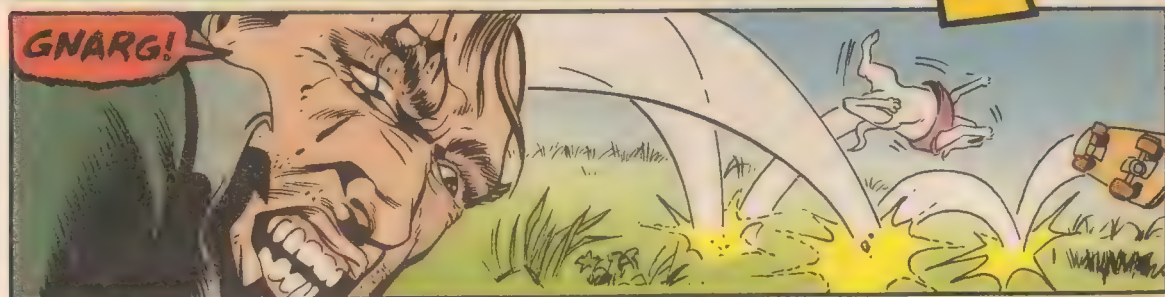
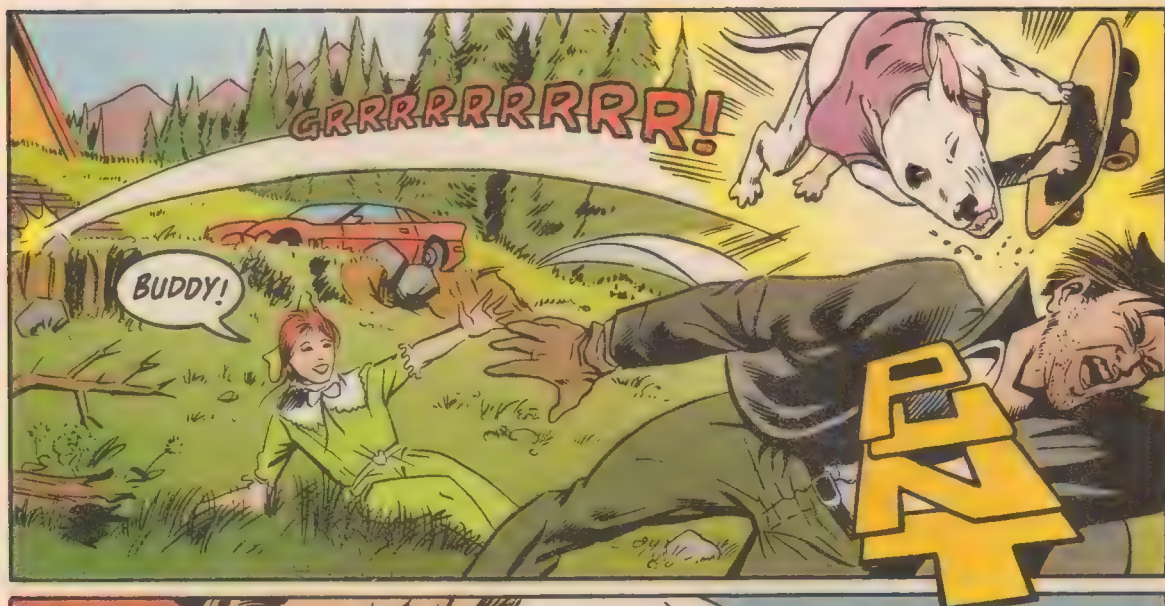
by
GERRY CONWAY,
RAFAEL KAYANAN,
and RICO RIVAL.

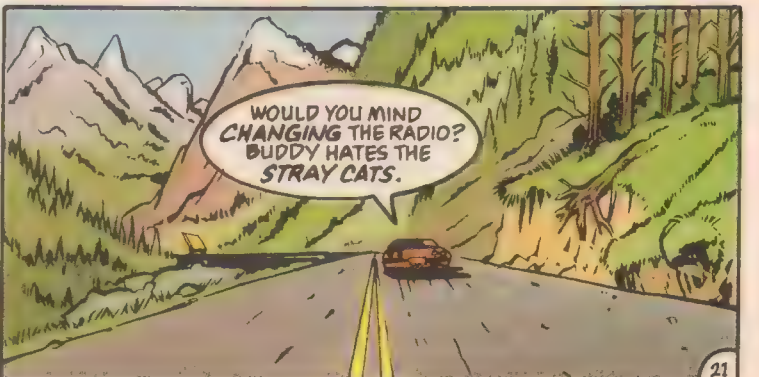
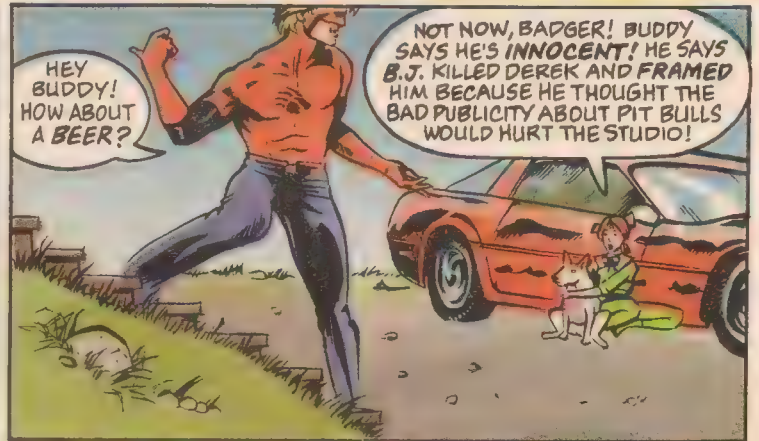
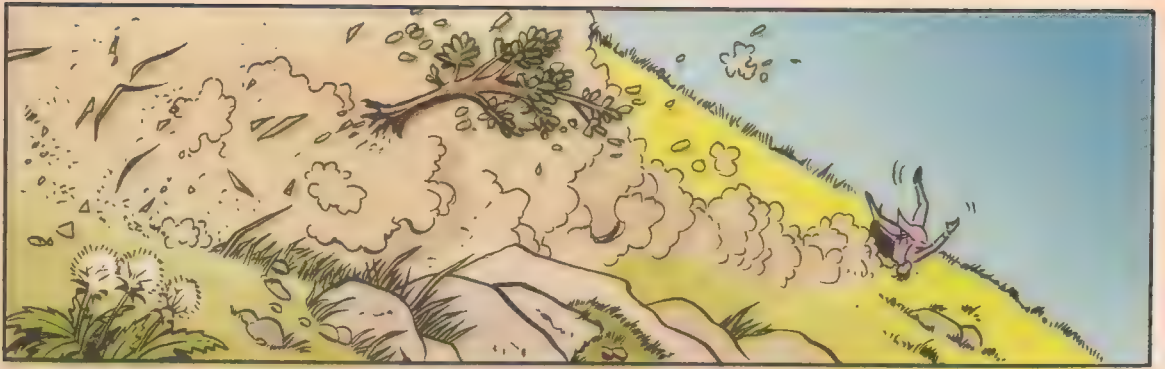
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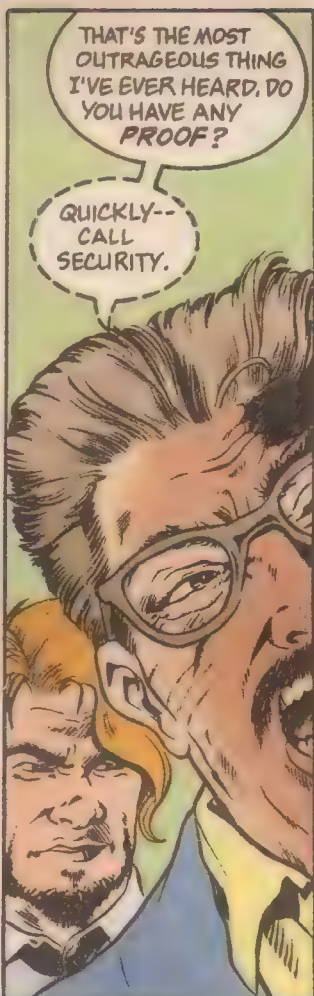


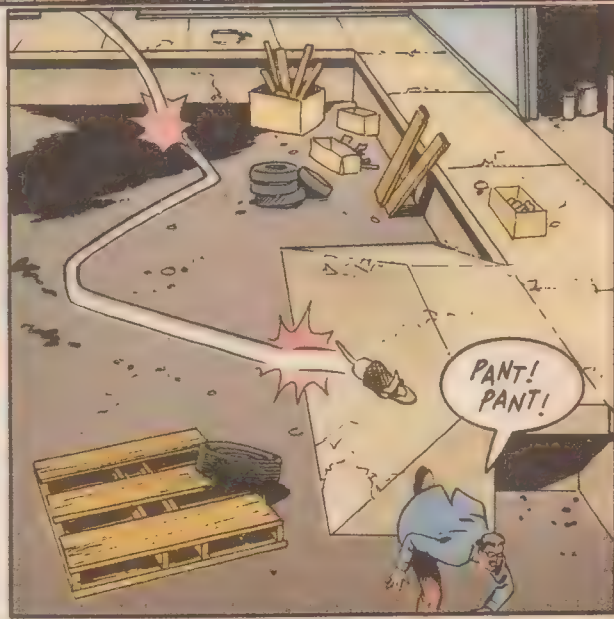


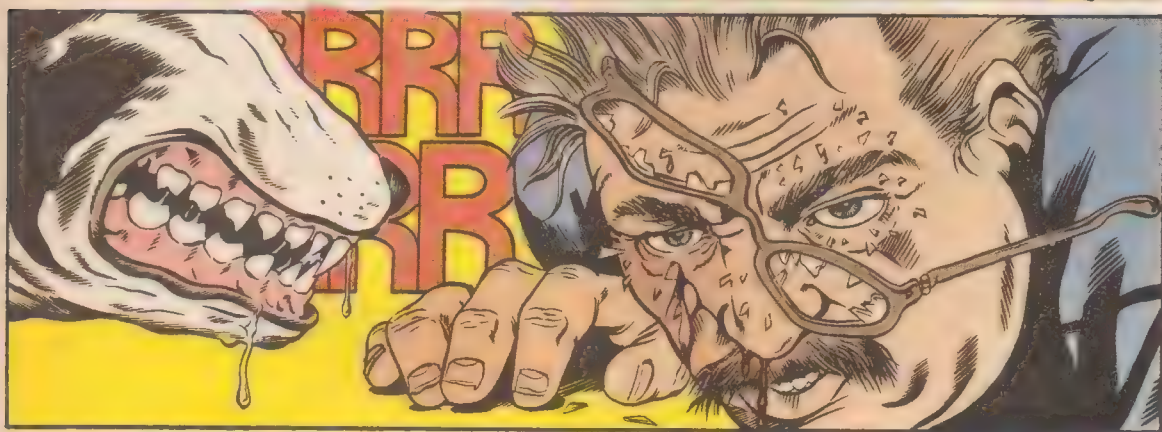
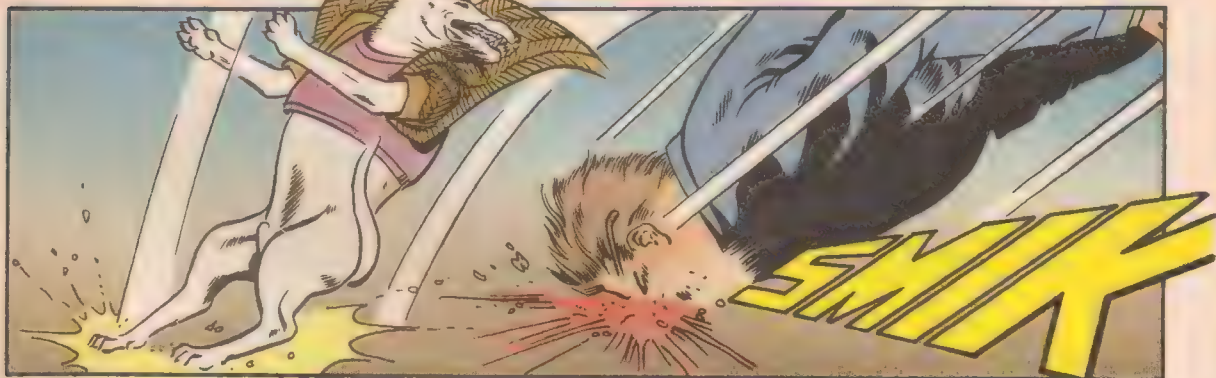
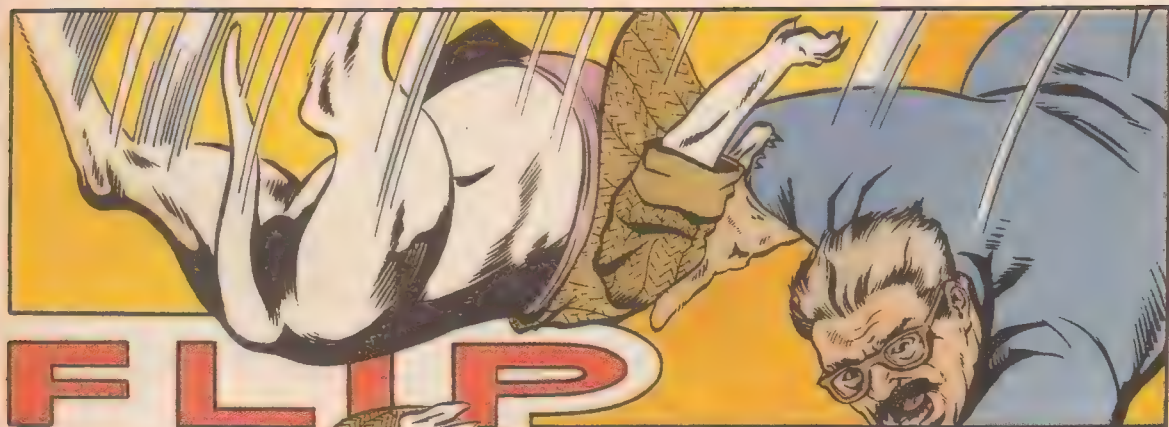














Dear LARRY,:

C/O FIRST COMICS
435 N. LASALLE
CHICAGO IL
60610

Dear Larry:

What, no Zone?

Cancel my subscription!!!

Yes, I know I don't have one, but cancel it anyway.

Good story, good back-up. Bring back Fred. I have plenty of tartar sauce.

[Illegible signature]

Dear Larry:

I really enjoyed Badger #36. It was great. For the past year, Badger sucked! He killed people; it wasn't funny anymore. Why bother reading? Because I'm rich and I can afford to buy things I don't like. So kiss off.

Issue #36 breathed life into a dead Badger! It was great — and no more of that newt either. He wasn't bad, but the space could have been used better.

Badger's back to his old self. I'm looking forward to the next issue already.

Max Rancid
11 Manitou Way
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

Hey, Larry:

A fine tribute to the Grateful Dead. A fine message about conservation. Wearing animal skins, especially *endangered* animals' skins is... well, it's alright if you *are* the animal... or if your name is Tarzan or

Nanook of the North; but I choose polyester. If it's good enough for the Badger, it's good enough for me.

Charlie Harris
2657 N. Mountain Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85719

Larry:

Back about 1969 or so I remember being at a place, on the outskirts of Portland, called Springers Ballroom. It was a small wooden hall with pictures of country western stars smiling proudly down from the walls. I say "was" because it later turned into a flea market and has since burned down.

At the time, I, along with two or three hundred others, was participating in a cultural experiment commonly referred to as a Grateful Dead concert. Bob Weir was at the microphone introducing a new song, "This next one we'd like to do for you is a paranoid love song." The band then played Dire Wolf. It was the first time I had heard the song, and I liked it.

I still remember walking outside after the show was over and watching the moonlight reflect off the steam as it rose from the sweaty bodies of the participants as they left the ballroom. To this day, if I listen really close on a quiet night, I can still hear the

sweet refrain of "Please don't murder me" drift softly by on a breeze.

Thanks.

Jeff Hodgson
8621 SE 67th Ave.
Portland, OR 97206

You're welcome, Jeff. We heard from a lot of Deadheads — or, "Jerry's kids" — about the Dire Wolf story. But do you actually expect us to believe that you went to a Grateful Dead concert in 1969 that ended before sunrise?

Dear Badger Crew:

Sorry I haven't written for awhile, but seeing my first ever letter printed in #36 gave me some motivation. The other big motivator was a 26 page Badger story! Hooray! America's favorite psycho is finally taking up all of his own book again. I really hope you can keep this up.

Now on to my comments on Dire Wolf. It was nice to see a situation where an animal was the true bad guy. I know he took care of the evil Feeny and Jocelyn, but he/it also wanted to kill Badge and Midge. Badger had to then slash some sense into the misguided creature. Now I know what Badger did might seem a tad cruel, but let's remember what Dire Wolf did:

"What kinda drooling, half-bright cheese dip is this? You think issue #35 was okay, you a wrong-type person. Where in the name of Alvin did you jokers put Clonezone??"

D.W. went around mutilating anyone who lived on the Indian land, regardless if they were evil or not, as was the case with Midge's late husband. Besides, D.W. could have listened to reason when Badger tried talking to him/it, but refused.

Now that that is cleared up, I would like to praise three people and their jobs which never get praised, as far as I know. Jay Geldhoff, Bill Oakley, and Ray Murtaugh take a bow; you are the unsung heroes of the comics business.

Lastly, I have a request: How about the return of Lord Waterlackus? Either that or a 26 page Badger story every month.

Adam Menetowski
6524 Traymore Ave.
Brooklyn, OH 44144

Don't judge the wolf by human standards. Our laws are not his laws. Badger met the wolf on his own terms, and I think they parted as equals.

While I don't want to turn this into a soapbox for animal rights, the sad fact is that, in our overindustrialized world, the only rights animals have anymore are the rights we allow them to have. It would go a long way toward proving our own worth if we would

allow our few remaining wild animals the space to live by their own laws — the laws of nature.

*As for your request: The next three issues of **Badger** will be full-length stories (26 pages), and we'll be doing more full-length stories in the future.*

Rick:

I agree with your June [cover date] editorial about changing artists on books. Ten or fifteen years ago I would have been "how dare you do that to me" pissed about Reinhold leaving Badger. Now I'm grateful for all of his work and amazing effort that kept Badger fresh.

Now Ron Lim deserves his chance. Ron does tend to overdo those aura lines around people's faces for reactions; it's just too much. I know this is comics, but I hope he can tone that down a bit. And keep up with things like Ham's suaveness and deadpan humor like in "Hot August Night" and "Senator."

One more thing about back-ups. I love the Zone and Baron; but I see the Zone deserves a rest, too. How about dragging Englehart in to revive Coyote? He's the writer I put right up there with Baron.

Don Miller
Santa Ana, CA

Hey Larry:

What kinda drooling, half-bright cheese dip is this? You think issue #35 was okay, you a wrong-type person. Where in the name of Alvin did you jokers put Clonezone??

Clonezone and Flaming Carrot in a graphic novel. Together. *Please* make that project Top Priority, *please*.

Pig Pronto
Boston, MA

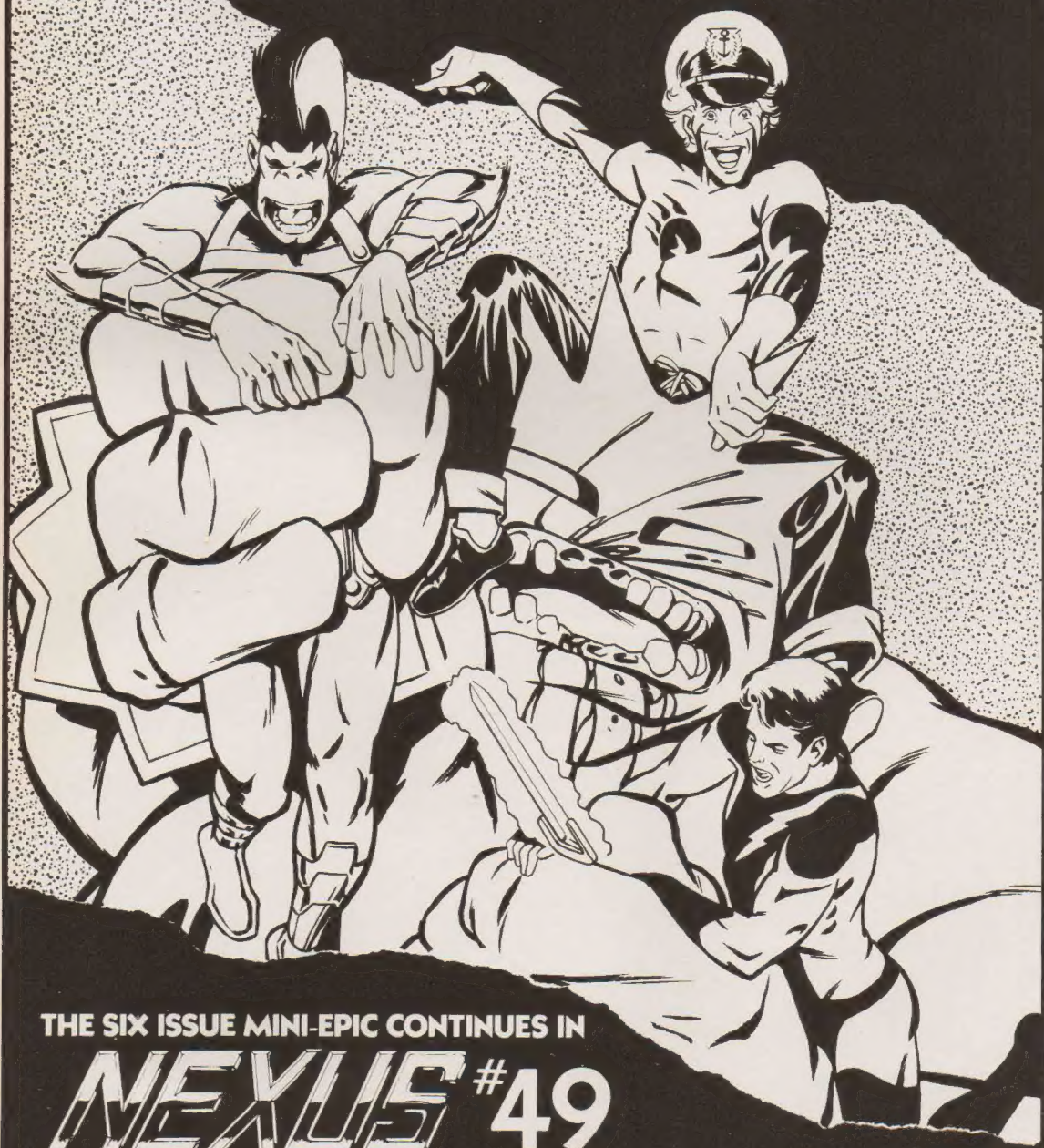


NEXT MONTH: Ron Lim returns as new regular artist and joins creator/writer **Mike Baron** for a story about... an ex-Nazi, transsexual nun? Join us in 30 days for part one of "Sister Twyster!"

—Rick Oliver

NEXUS AND BADGER

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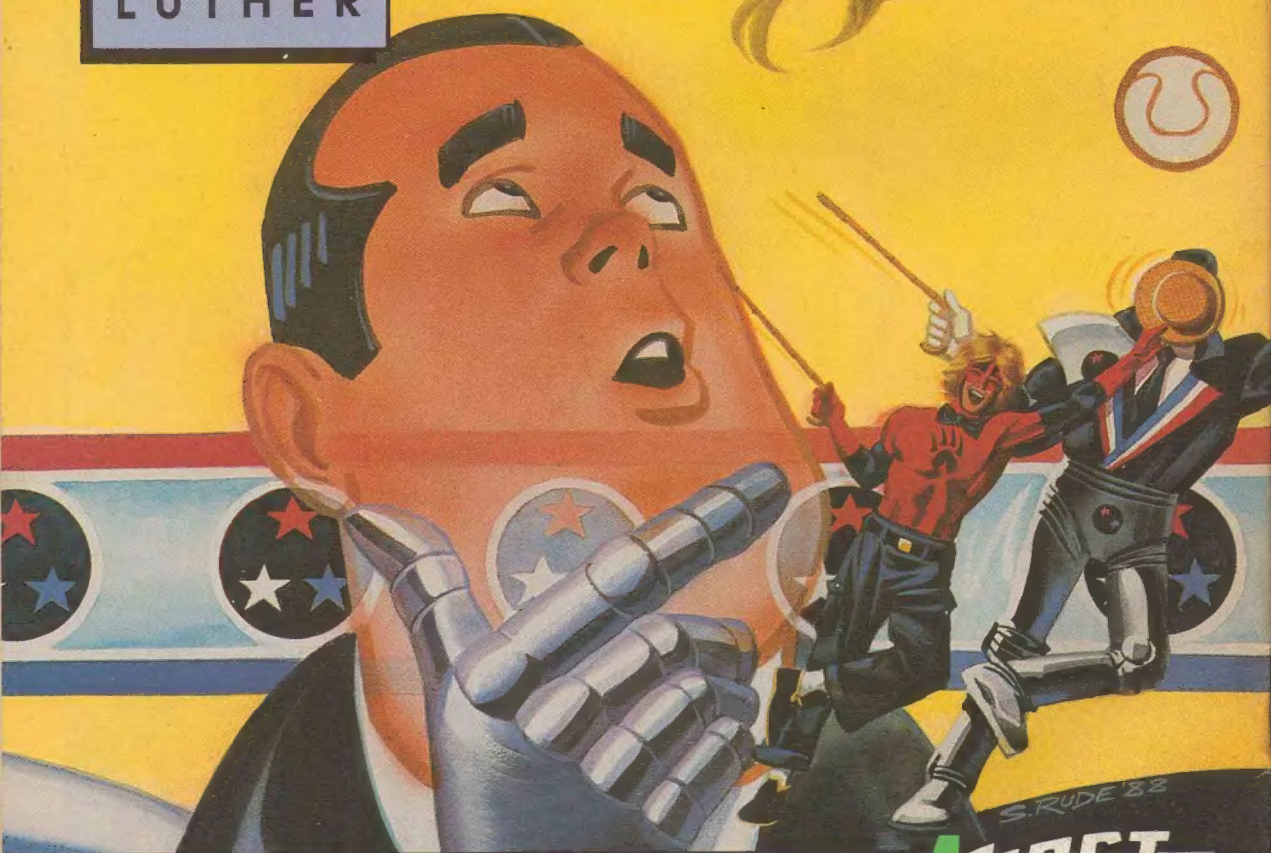
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